

Official Magazine of the United States Gymnastics Federation

# USA GYMNASTICS

September/October 1987

Volume 16, No. 5



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# USA GYMNASTICS

September/October 1987

Volume 16, No. 5

## On the Cover

### PAN AMERICAN DOMINANCE

Scott Johnson, Diane Simpson and Sabrina Mar represent just a few of the American gymnasts who excelled during the Pan American Games in Indianapolis, Indiana. Johnson and Mar won the all-around title in their respective divisions while Simpson's gold medals in the individual event finals made U.S. history.



Cover photos © 1987 USGF, by Dave Black

Page 20

(Right, Brian Ginsberg)

## RECORD EXCITEMENT

The 1987 Olympic Festival in North Carolina was the site of record crowds, record scores and a bunch of great performances by Marina Konyavsky, Robin Richter and Neil Palmer to name a few.

Page 10

## KONICA CUP PREMIERES AT PRINCETON

The world's best rhythmic gymnasts will gather at Princeton University in October for the first international gathering at the Konica Cup.

Page 16

## SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF

The International Special Olympics, recently held in South Bend, IN, brought together 4,700 athletes from the 50 states and all over the world. Although the athletes were assembled to compete for medals, winning didn't seem as important as trying.

Page 42

## USGF Editorial

Page 5

## Editor's Note

Page 6

## Editor Letters

Page 8

## USGF Report

Page 18

## Product Update

Page 40

## Sponsor Update

Page 40

## Event Calendar

Page 44

## Classified Ads

Page 46

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# USCF EDITORIAL

## Sports, The Universal Language

**By Mike Jacki,  
USCF Executive Director**

**T**he Pan American Games has always been an event of some controversy. In past years, the United States Gymnastics Federation has treated the event with mixed emotions. We would never enter an event with the intention of doing any less than our best. Yet, we often felt the Pan American Games needed to be treated differently. Therefore, we have perhaps not accomplished what many feel we could, specific to this event.

Obviously, this year was different. With the event in the United States, a need to establish the USA teams before the World Championships and the Olympic Games, and with the Pan American Games being hosted in the USGF's hometown, we wanted to position ourselves for success. Needless to say, we accomplished our goal.

Perhaps more importantly, we once again were able to see, first hand, the true value of international sport. The Pan American Games brings countries from North, South and Central America together. We seldom have the opportunity to meet these athletes, coaches and officials. In particular, there are a number of countries that do not participate in other world events. At the same time, it is always fascinating to see how similar we all are in coaching and judging our athletes.

The common point of discussion is always one of cooperation; how can we work together in the best interest of gymnastics and sport? These discussions take place with both sincerity and appreciation. No matter what differences may exist between the two coun-



tries, the need and desire for cooperation in sport is always present.

The Pan American Games was a success. Not because the American teams won, but more-so because we accomplished what an event like this is supposed to accomplish. We established and renewed relationships with friends from other parts of the world. We participated in an international sports exchange and were able to shake hands with our opponents at the end. We found new things about our friends from other countries and these relationships helped create a mutual respect that comes from sport. We now have other ways to work with these people to assist them in their development. When they develop and improve, not only does the standard of sport increase, so does the standard of life.

Sports exchange allows this to happen; to meet new friends, demonstrate our skills and abilities and improve the quality of life between two countries or two people. Sport, and only sport, has this unique character. Sport is a wonderful way to reach people and it is truly the world's universal language.

# Notes From Pan Amania

By Michael G. Becklin  
Editor, USA GYMNASTICS

It all started out so simply. Two years ago, Indianapolis received the bid to host the Tenth Pan American Games. No problem, we have two years' plenty of time.

Flash, the two years are gone and we're standing at the opening ceremonies watching Kristi Phillips carry the torch down the straightaway on the Indy 500 track.

**WEEK ONE.** The press began to assemble for the Games on August 1. They were here in force from all over the western hemisphere—all the heavyweights. Visitors began to flow into town around the fifth. Suddenly we're consumed, the rhythmic competition starts and record crowds are attending. Outside, the volunteers, still green, not hardened by actual combat, slow spectators and press alike with formalities. By Thursday, most would rather recognize your face or not be so strict. All were settling in for a long two weeks.

The pin trading phenomenon began slowly. The pros came in early to dump off all of their left over Sam the Eagle pins from the 1984 Olympics to rookie traders. Unsuspecting, delegation pins were eagerly given up for these pins which couldn't be given away later. By the beginning of WEEK TWO, traders had chosen the Pan American Plaza for the unofficial venue to wheel and deal as the USGF staff watched the progress from its new third floor office.

Everyone was still in a great mood as Hoosier Hospitality won the world over. Local watering holes were packed until closing (3 a.m.) with the press corps and visiting dignitaries. Indianapolis, where two years ago on a Sunday afternoon you could fire a cannon down the main street and not hit anyone, was alive. The city was all dressed up and making a grand impression, and it was exciting.

A long week (WEEK TWO) of competition ended with the United States gymnasts taking the team gold and several individual gold medals. There was no time for any other sports as the Hoosier Dome became home. Fatigue began to set in during the compulsory of the women (WEEK THREE), but it was the women and it was different so it was still exciting.

Sometime between the women's compulsory and optional finals, Amiga, the mascot of the Games, went from cute to doomed. The jokes began to circulate along with T-shirts depicting Amiga's demise. But the fans kept coming and the USA kept winning.

By this time, the pin traders were out of control. They were blocking an entire intersection with their transactions and it went on night and day. People were obsessed going for that "one big trade." By this time, the delegation pins traded earlier for Sam the Eagle were selling for between 20 and 30 bucks. Poor old Sam was worthless. A USGF pin, which could be purchased in the office for \$250, could be taken down to the street and sold for \$17. Isn't America great?

Sabrina Mar won the all-around as, next door at the boxing venue, Sugar Ray Leonard and Muhammad Ali signed autographs and gave pointers to hangers on. The excitement in the air was renewed because the Games were almost over.

Last minute shoppers dashed, crammed and groped their way to the official souvenir shops

to get that perfect T-shirt and maybe a key chain Soccer ball—you were big as were Pan Am golf shirts. Everywhere you looked, you are THAT logo.

The closing ceremonies, complete with boring speeches from dignitaries thanking the world for a great time, was highlighted by energetic tunes from the Miami Sound Machine. As the athletes danced and joined together, I sat stunned. It was over.

Personal feelings were racing through my head. Had it been fun? I haven't had time to think about that. There is a certain depression that sets in after you have been "up" for so long. You feel as if your best friend moved. Something was missing.

**WEEK FOUR** arrived and downtown Indianapolis, once the hub of activity, was deserted. The main press center, located on the first floor of the Pan American Plaza, was being torn apart, but still you needed a credential to get in. The gymnastics podium was down and gone and the Colts turf was being layed down. Already, everything was back to normal.

At night, the local television sports were back to baseball and the State Fair was back in the headlines. The trotters were running, the elephant cars were selling, the corn this year was really sweet and the pork sandwiches were better than ever. The sports anchors stopped using the smattering of Spanish they picked up because those who spoke it were gone.

Here at the USGF, Congress and catching up was the order of the day. World Championships and the American Cup are going to be here before we know it. Then the Olympics, but that's a whole year away.

Plenty of time



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**Friday, October 5, 1987**

Bethlehem, Ohio - 9:00am-3:00pm

Bethlehem Academy Inc.

4743 Brookville Road

Bethlehem, OH 44786

Course Directors: Ken Garcia - 216-628-3970

Dr. Gerald George - 318-368-1220

This course will be carried out during the Region V

Gymnastics Congress

**Monday, October 12, 1987**

Longhorns, New York - 10:00am-5:00pm

Shawnee Hotel - Longhorns

Course Director: Paul Spadaro - 716-616-6287

This course will be conducted during the New York

State Coaches Meeting

**Monday, October 11, 1987**

Ames, Iowa - 9:00am-4:00pm

Iowa State University - PE Building

Course Directors: Dave Nicholson - 515-284-4444

Mike Sharples - 515-254-4262

2. Austin, Texas 9:00am-4:00pm

Course Director: Bruce Dworkin - 713-396-3535

This course will be conducted during the

Gymnastics Association of Texas (GAT) Congress.

**Friday, October 23, 1987**

Midland, Michigan - 9:00am-4:00pm

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Course Contact: Judy Freshet - 313-743-0141

**Monday, October 26, 1987**

San Diego, California - 9:00am-5:00pm

Peterson Gymnasium

San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182

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**Monday, November 1, 1987**

Minneapolis, Minnesota - 9:00am-5:00pm

University of Minnesota

Coke Hall

1960 University Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55455

Course Directors: Julia Thompson Aron -

612-620-0020

Fred Roehrbacher - 612-625-8667

**Monday, November 5, 1987**

Massachusetts - During the Region VI Gymnastics

Congress.

Course Director: Paul Spadaro - 716-616-6287

Course Contact: Kirby Feltman - 617-784-5830

**Friday, November 13 - Sunday, November 15, 1987**

During the Western Regional Coaches Congress

Course Director: James Stephenson - 505-277-0355

**Saturday, November 14, 1987**

New Haven, Connecticut - 10:00am-5:00pm

Southern Connecticut State University

Pels Gymnasium

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Course Director: Joann Hicks - 203-375-3244

**Sat, December 12, 1987**

Hawaii - During the Aloha Gym Fest

Course Director: Sue Sandmore - 206-385-1857

Dates, Times and Locations will all be listed in **USA GYMNASTICS** and  
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and Education at (317) 237-5050

# EDITOR LETTERS

## Nadia Fan

Dear Editor,

**M**y name is Yvonne King and I'm 15 years old. I'm a Class III compulsory/optional gymnast and subscriber to *USA GYMNASTICS*. In your November/December 1986 issue, I was very excited to hear about Nadia, and to see pictures of her.

Ever since I can remember, she has been my favorite and I've looked up to her. Reading the article (Nadia: One For The Books) and seeing the pictures of her, I never knew how strong she really was.

I read that article over and over again. Everytime I read it, it makes me want to work even harder so I can be the best. I hope to hear more about her in your future issues. Keep up the good work.

Yvonne King,  
Sacramento, CA

## The Goal

Dear Editor,

**I**would like to congratulate you on your fine efforts to produce an outstanding magazine. I have fun reading it because it is interesting reading about the fitness and outstanding people I would like to be one of those people one day.

Hank Schott,  
Beltsville, TX

## Confidence Booster

Dear Editor,

**I**love gymnastics and I'm competing team all-around. I love competing, but I get very nervous and shaky. My name is Azma Panigrahi, I'm 11 years old and a Class IV training for Class III.

I read a lot of your articles in the magazine and they were very helpful to me. I learned that if thousands of other gymnasts can compete with confidence, so can I! Your magazine is great and thanks for being so helpful. I am a member and I carry my USGF card with pride.

Azma Panigrahi,  
Riverside, NJ

## Injury Education

Dear Editor,

**A**lthough I read everything in your May/June issue of *USA GYMNASTICS*, I really paid attention to the article about gymnastic injuries (Gymnastic Injury: A Word To The Wind).

I love gymnastics and I've been involved for three years at Northwest Turners in Chicago. I think everyone who is involved in gymnastics and works on apparatus should read the article.

Thanks for putting the article in, I learned something from it.

Jami Garner,  
Chicago, IL

## Identifying With Injury

Dear Editor,

**I**was writing in response to the article in your Editor's Letters section of July/August *USA GYMNASTICS*. I can totally identify with "The Injury" poem about pain and working because you love the sport.

I was faced with the same situation. I fractured my back a month before the state meet. This injury would soon end my gymnastics career. I kept working out with incredible pain. The week before the meet, the pain got worse and I had to lay off a couple of days.

I went into the meet cold, stiff and in pain. I was taking pain killers and using my back, but nothing seemed to help. My coach asked if I wanted to scratch, but by this time I was determined to compete because I knew this would be my last meet ever and I wanted to win.

I realized I had to block out the pain and do it - and I did. I won the all-around, vault, beam and floor and took second on bars. It was the only way I wanted to leave the sport I love so very much.

Jeanie Doyle,  
Washington



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# RECORD EXCITEMENT



Joyce Wilborn was a shining star during the 1987 Olympic Festival as she set two records and received the first 10.00 in the Festival's history, one for floor and the other for vault. Her floor routine adds another dimension to the word "funk."

By Mike Botkin

**P**re-most chatter had this competition as a wash. "It's just a bunch of no-name gymnasts who will be there. Everybody who is anybody is off training for the Pan American Games." But you know what? Somebody forgot to tell the gymnasts.

Record crowds came in droves to the Dean Smith Arena, or 'Dean Dome' as it was affectionately dubbed, on the campus of the University of North Carolina to watch America's second team battle to the last event—and nobody went home disappointed.

What transpired at the 1987 Olympic Festival was an opportunity for those gymnasts usually mired behind the pack to come into their most with the field wide open. This was not an event dominated by one or two gymnasts as has been the case in the past. This was a competition that, at times, had lead changes after every event. Where the men's all-around title came down to high bar, and, in the case of Neil Palmer, his stellar routine was just 10 better than David St. Pierre's in that margin of victory.

It was also a competition where two kids from Nebraska took home the top all-around honors. Palmer, a student at the University of Nebraska, and Robin

Richter, a Lincoln resident, put their state "on the map" according to the letter.

But what the friendly people of North Carolina were treated to was the Olympic Festival at its purest. One set up to showcase athletes who may never get the chance to grace a podium at the World Championships or the Olympics. It gave them a chance to share the spotlight, to dream and the encouragement to continue to strive to be the best. So in this way, the competition that took place those hot humid days of July was more meaningful than any other in past years.

## Men's Competition

Neil Palmer, representing the South and a good optioned gymnast as he proved in the recent Championships of the USA, used his talents to ward off strong performances by David St. Pierre, Lance Ringwald and Chuck Gerardo to take the all-around title. The North team, however, using the strength of the second, third and fourth place finishers, took the team title by a 278.700 to 273.450 victory over the South.

The classic battle between Palmer and St. Pierre evolved after the first event. Palmer jumped out to the early lead after a 9.80 floor routine score. He held this lead until St. Pierre executed his excellent high bar routine scoring a 9.65 while Palmer was scoring a 9.85 on pommel horse.

(USGF photos © 1987 by Bret Frazier)

With one event left, St. Pierre had a .850 lead over the Nebraska senior St. Pierre finished on floor scoring a 9.60 and left the rest up to Palmer, who hit his high bar routine for a 9.75 to give him the all-around title.

Gerardo kept himself right in the middle of the pack with such fine scores as a 9.70 on floor and a 9.45 on pommel horse. "After placing 28th at the Championships, I had serious doubts about continuing. But this meet really boosted my confidence. This will take me through the rest of the year and I will probably do better," said Gerardo after placing fifth all-around.

Robert Sundstrum, by virtue of a 9.80 on floor, pulled down the

highest score of the all-around competition. A poor rings routine (8.85) put him out of the all-around hunt, though. "This (meet) is a great experience. Optionals are what I need to work on," said Sundstrum.

In the event finals, St. Pierre got some consolation as he won two gold medals (high bar and floor), a silver (parallel bars) and a bronze (pommel horse). He was the only gymnast to qualify for all six event finals, although in two events (vault and rings) he had only an outside chance at winning a medal.

"I want 12 for 12 and I've never done that before in my life," said an excited St. Pierre. "I'm going to go back and be on 'cloud nine' for a while, then I'm going to

train real hard. With each routine I get more relaxed and more confident," he said.

St. Pierre's floor routine captured the imagination of those present for the individual event finals. "I've taken two years of ballet and had one year of modern dance," he stated. "I need more flexibility but my training in dance helps me get around that. That really polishes my routine and makes up for my lack of flexibility."

Palmer came through with a strong 9.65 on parallel bars to take the gold in that event. He placed ahead of St. Pierre and Trent Dumas. Lance Ringgold and Dumas provided a close contest as they pushed St. Pierre for the high bar title. Ringgold nailed his routine (9.60) as did Dumas (9.775) for the silver and bronze medals respectively.

Gerardo got his wish on pommel horse, defeating Mark Bowers by .075 for the gold medal. "I really wanted to win an individual medal and after floor (8.80), I knew it wouldn't be that. I had three events left and pommel horse is my strongest event." Gerardo won another medal, a

Nail Palmer, with his dramatic high bar routine, captured the all-around title with this event. The University of Nebraska student didn't hit his finals routine which paved the way for David St. Pierre to take the gold.



David St. Pierre captured the gold medal on high bar during the 1987 Olympic Festival in Durham, North Carolina. Pierre also captured the silver medal all-around.

silver on rings as he was edged out by North teammate Mike Chaplin. Palmer took the bronze by .10 over Dumas.

Sundstrum took the gold medal on vault with a 9.70 for his handspring front with a half twist. Behind him were Patrick Kirksey and Ringgold who tied for the silver with 18.85 points each. Kirksey, representing the East squad, won the silver medal on floor just behind St. Pierre. Following him was Ringgold, who scored a 9.40 in final.





The women's all-around winners acknowledge the record crowd's approval. They are Robin Richter, gold medalist, Danna Lister, silver medalist and Sunja Knapp bronze medalist.

### Women's Competition

As Robin Richter and Fulmer left Nebraska together on the plane, they were gazing out the window chatting. "We were talking about how neat it would be if two people from Nebraska would win," she said. "We thought it would let people know there is a Nebraska on the map."

After Fulmer held up his end of the bargain, Richter, 18, did her part to put her home state on the map by edging Danna Lister 38,300 to 38,150 for the all-around title. Behind Richter's performance, her West team outdistanced the South 187,300 to 186,400 for the team gold. The East won the bronze with a 186,150 count over the North's 185,150.

This was a big victory for Richter considering she was coming back from an injury. "In January I fell on bars and fractured my left arm. I'm just coming back from that," said Richter. "My major goal was to go out there and show off for the crowd."

She had no problem doing that as she came from sixth place after the first rotation to win with scores of 9.70 on beam, 9.65 on floor, 9.55 on bars and 9.40 on vault.

Lister endeared herself to the record crowds with her excellent performances on beam (9.70), bars (9.65) and floor (9.60). Her only breakdown came on vault where she scored a 9.30. That came in the third rotation, just after she had taken the lead. "I was really nervous after the warmup vault be-

cause I only got one vault," she said. But in the final event, bars, she outscored Sunja Knapp by .350 to overtake second and the silver medal, while Knapp finished third.

Joyce Wilborn, who began the competition with a 9.65 vault, plummeted after an 8.35 bars routine but fought her way back into fourth place with a 9.90 on floor and a 9.65 on beam, usually her weakest event. But as the crowd was to find out during the event finals, Wilborn's best efforts were yet to come.

Wilborn's mark on Olympic Festival history came as the largest crowd ever to see a gymnastics competition in the United States (20,406) watched on. In recent competi-

tions, the North Stars' gymnast has been making waves with her floor exercise routine and vault. It is understandable that she do well in these events considering the power in her legs makes her a strong tumbler as well as giving her tremendous momentum during her vault.

Coming into the vault finals, Wilborn had a commanding lead. The only way she could not win the gold was to fall on her layout backbars with a full twist. But she took a page from Mary Lou Retton's Olympic diary and stuck her vault as if she had three-foot spines in her heels. For that, she received a 10.00, the first in Olympic Festival history. So, just like Retton, Wilborn stuck her second vault a little better than the first for another 10.00.

"I really wanted to get a 10.00 on my vault today," said a reserved Wilborn. "It was my first in competition." Her score of 19.85 broke the 1979 record set in Colorado Springs by Christa Canyon and Jackie Cassile of 19.55.

Wilborn's floor routine contains something that is missing in every other routine—it has five. It includes the "Moon Walk", plenty of dance and lots of crowd appeal. And when there are 20,000 plus cheering wildly, that adds up to a lot of influence. Almost as soon as she had a chance to run and wave to the other side of the

arena, the judges had thrown her another 10.00. "All the people in my house do the 'Moon Walk' so I just incorporated it into my routine," said Wilborn. "I am very pleased with what I did today, although I realize the uneven bars are keeping me from getting to the top. I am going to work on them very hard."

She easily won the gold, scoring another Olympic Festival record of 19.90 in the process. Tanya Service took the silver and Lister was awarded the bronze.

Megan Fenton, after suffering through three agonizing all-

around events and placing 23rd of 24, finally hit her bars routine to make it into the finals. Tied with Lister at 9.65, Fenton, 14, of Sandy, Utah and Rocky Mountain Gymnastics watched nervously as Lister faulted with an 8.90 on her bars routine. As she approached the apparatus, Fenton remembers little of her gold medal routine except for the very beginning. "As soon as my hands hit that bar, my body takes over. I really don't hear anything during my routine. Bars have always been

my best event. I was very excited to be in this competition." Fenton was adopted from Korea and brought to the United States when she was 11 months old. Richter edged Juliette Bangerter for the silver on bars.

It was a hard fought battle but when the chalk cleared, Lister and Wilborn had struggled to a tie for the gold medal on balance beam with 19.450 totals. Knapp, 14, of Berks Gymnastics Academy won the bronze medal with a 19.300 total.

Despite the record 58,659 fans who came to

the four day meet, it was Wilborn's performance during the finals that will go down in Olympic Festival history. "There is definitely absolute perfection in gymnastics, that's what we strive for and obviously today Joyce did that," said Fenton. "I don't usually look at other competitors, but she's really amazing. She's so powerful. She seems to float through the air and never come down."

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# EXPERIENCE PAYS OFF



Eugenia Yuan, a rising star in rhythmic gymnastics, performed well during the 1987 Olympic Festival to finish fifth. She represents the quality youth being produced throughout the country. (USGF photo © 1987, by Bret Presche)

By Mike Botkin

**T**here is always something to be said about experience — mostly that it pays off. In this case, it was Marina Knyavsky who received the dividends of her extensive rhythmic gymnastics experience as she won top honors in the 1987 Olympic Festival in Raleigh, North Carolina July 22-23, defeating Denise Simpson and Irina Rabincheva.

Knyavsky, who held a .30 lead over Simpson after the first round, set four Olympic Festival records, including a record 77.40 all-around score. "This is my best competition ever," said the usually emotionally reserved Knyavsky. "For the first time we had the big crowd (3,600 for second session and 7,404 two day attendance) which really helped all of us. Today I was performing."

Her record-setting performances came in the clubs (19.50), rope (19.25) and ribbon (19.45) where she tied Simpson, in addition to her all-around record. Simpson grabbed the record in the hoop event with a two-day total of 19.40.

One of the major drawbacks to Knyavsky's routines is her lack of expression. Because her experience level is much higher than her counterparts, she appears very confident while gliding through her technically correct exercises.

But slowly and surely she has been adjusting her usually terse

outlook into that of a performer, which was capped by her excellent performance during the Festival. Because her routines incorporate a full array of emotions, when she does let loose of a flashing smile, a cat-like grin or a piercing stare, the effect generated greatly enhanced her performance.

In addition to this, she has the experience factor, which, according to Simpson, gives Knyavsky an edge. "She doesn't have to worry whether the apparatus is going to be there or not. She knows it will be there and she can concentrate on completing the move and getting on to the next. For most of us, that isn't the case."

That was exactly the case for Simpson. Still in the hunt for the all-around title, which carried with it a number one status on the upcoming Pan American Games team, Simpson missed her catch with clubs and the 9.25 score sealed her into second place. Ironically, it was the same misstep she committed at the National Championships in April which put her into the same position. "I was a little nervous coming in," she said with a crooked smile and a shake of her shoulders, "but we have to support each other for the sake of the team, for the United States."

Knyavsky was untouchable the final day of competition, posting 9.80 on hoop and clubs and 9.70 on rope and ribbon. Her usually critical coach Alla Savitsky was prompted to smile and say,

"When you win, you are satisfied. It was real important that everyone performed well. This was a very important competition."

Another one of Savitsky's gymnasts, Rubinshtein, came through with a very steady performance. Her innovative tambourine accompaniment for rope was hindered by the ineffectiveness of her execution as she scored her lowest total of the competition, a 9.30. But she calmed herself and finished the competition with scores of 9.45 or better to place just ahead of Michelle Berube.

In just five months, Berube has brought herself back into the top four, barely missing the cut for the Pan American team. Clubs during the preliminaries (8.55) and hoop during finals (9.35) proved to be her downfall to an otherwise uplifting competition for this 1984 Olympian.

Deacon Lister, who placed third all-around in the National Championships, detected a stress fracture in her right foot and was unable to compete during the preliminary round, thus taking her out of the running for the Pan American team. Lister, who was very upset at missing this chance, wanted to make some sort of amends and competed in the final round, despite the pain, scoring a hefty 87.76 which was the fourth best score of the day.

In what could be called the closest thing to a rhythmic gymnastics phenomenon, Eugenia Yuan

continued on page 44

# 1987 KONICA CUP PREMIERS AT PRINCETON



## Konica Cup

International  
Rhythmic  
Gymnastics  
Invitational

**G**ymnasts from six nations will gather in Princeton, New Jersey, October 17-18 for the first Konica Cup. Scheduled to be an annual event, this new world-class international competition will "put rhythmic gymnastics on the map in the U.S.," according to United States Gymnastics Federation administrators.

The 1987 Konica Cup will feature 60 of the best rhythmic gymnasts in the world in this beautiful Olympic sport. The reigning World Champion Bulgarian team will compete along with the best rhythmic gymnasts from the United States, Soviet Union, Japan, Canada and Brazil.

The two-day event will include competition in both individual and group exercises. The 1987 Konica Cup will be the first major international competition held in the United States to feature group rhythmic gymnastics. "Those fortunate enough to see the event firsthand or watch it on television (ESPN will be taping the competition) are in for a rare treat," according to Nora Hitzel, USGF rhythmic program administrator.

"When most people first see rhythmic gymnastics, they are very surprised at how enjoyable it is to watch," explained Hitzel. "When they first see world-class group competition, fans are absolutely stunned. It is truly incredible to watch."

World-class rhythmic gymnasts are revered in European countries where they are treated as the athletic equivalent to royalty. In Bulgaria, world champions such as Irina Ignatova and Blagovesta Pencheva are showered with adoration, enjoying a celebrity status that in the United States is reserved only for the likes of a Molly Ringwald or Madonna.

Their stunning beauty, grace and an absolute command over a sport that some insist is an art form is the reason for the adoration.

Rhythmic gymnastics, as a form of artistic expression, has its roots in early European folk dances. Its history as an athletic discipline stretches back to the first decades of the 20th century when small, local competitions began to spring up. During 1940-1950, the popularity of rhythmic competitions



grew and in 1962 the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) officially recognized the discipline as a sport.

The first World Championships were held in 1963 in Budapest, Hungary, featuring competition in rope, hoop, ball and clubs. The ribbon, now one of the most popular events, was not added as an official event until 1971.

Each day of the 1987 Koniex Cup will feature group and individual event competition. All-around and group routine preliminaries will be at 7 p.m. Saturday, October 17. All-around and group routine finals begin at 2 p.m. Sunday, October 18. Both sessions will take place in Jadwin Gymnasium on the campus of Princeton University.

"This event will be a great boost to rhythmic gymnastics in the United States. It would not be possible without the tremendous support of the Koniex Corporation," said Mike Jacki, executive director of the USGF. "Koniex's support of our national rhythmic program will be instrumental in promoting the growth and development of the sport in the U.S."

In announcing his corporation's new in-

volvement with the USGF, Koniex Corporation President Mugiura Ido stated, "We are indeed proud to associate our name with one of humankind's oldest forms of visual communication.

"Literally since the dawn of mankind, women and children have performed rhythmic dances that are now embodied in the Olympic sport," said Ido, adding, "This form of visual communication is at the heart of Koniex's highest corporate challenge — to spread human understanding through visual media."

In celebration of this historic event, Koniex is also sponsoring a special promotional exhibition featuring the winners of the Princeton competition at a United Nations invitation only performance to benefit UNICEF. The exhibition will take place the evening of October 20 in the main lobby of the United Nations building.

Ticket sales for the Princeton competition will also benefit UNICEF. Fifty cents of every ticket sold will be donated to this worldwide children's charity organization.

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## Eligibility Update No. 3

By Cheryl Grace  
USGF Eligibility Administrator

*(Editor's Note: This is the second part of a two-part series dealing with common questions on athlete eligibility. Part one appeared in the July/August issue of USA GYMNASTICS.)*

2. You may be compensated for participation in advertisements provided:

- a. You do not represent a gymnast.
- b. Prior to enrollment at an NCAA institution the advertisement must be retracted.

For more information concerning NCAA Eligibility Rules and interpretations of these rules, contact the NCAA directly at: NCAA Legislative Services, Hall Avenue at 63rd Street, P.O. Box 1906, Miamon, KS 66201, or call (312) 384-3330.

Whether or not you wish to protect your NCAA eligibility, the following are important eligibility rules that must be followed by all gymnasts protecting their USGF eligibility for national and international competitions:

1. A gymnast may not be commercially involved with a company unless that company is a sponsor for the USGF. This rule would allow a company such as McDonald's to have you appear in its television commercial, as McDonald's is currently a USGF national corporate sponsor. If you were asked to participate in the same kind of commercial for Burger King, you would have to set up a Limited Sponsorship Agreement with the USGF in order for this opportunity to take place and for you to maintain eligibility since Burger King is not a USGF national corporate sponsor.

2. The company should contact the USGF directly to

formulate the agreement for the limited purpose of allowing you to make the appearance. All details of the agreement, including the sponsorship fees, would be discussed at that time. The Limited Sponsorship Agreement applies regardless of whether compensation is paid or not.

When in doubt, call the USGF at (317) 438-8743, or write to: Eligibility, 1059 North Meridian St., Suite 320, Indianapolis, IN. (After August 1, 1987, use the new USGF address: Fox Air Plaza, Suite 300, Indianapolis, IN 46226, or call (317) 237-5050.)

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# ONE FOR THE GIPPER



**Men's Champions.** The United States accomplished goal No. 1 as they captured the team championship during the Pan American Games. They are from the left Brian Ginsberg; Scott Johnson; Tim Daggett; Tom Schliesinger; Kevin Davis and Charles Laker.

*Featuring photos By Dave Black © USGF 1987*



**By Mike Botkin**

**T**o use some terminology from an old Ronald Reagan movie, it was time to "win one for the Gipper." In this case the Gipper was the United States and those in need of the win were the much maligned men's gymnastics team.

The national program needed the booster shot the Pan American Games could provide. Doubts about the program's effectiveness had been gathering like storm clouds on the horizon, and this unseasonably mild August provided the perfect window to peek into the future. The Pan American Games, on the inside, gave Americans a chance

to spark optimism and patriotism not felt since the sun set in Los Angeles back in 1984.

There was only one problem with this perfect scenario—a strong Cuban squad was poised to run on the U.S.'s parade. Led by the agiles Casimiro Suarez and Felix Aguilera, the Cuban team, who defeated the United States in the 1985 World Championships (564.35—563.04), had been looked away in training since September 1988 just for this event. To further spur them on, they received a personal audience with Premier Fidel Castro who told them to go and compete with honor for their country. So carrying this incentive in their hearts, the Cuban team became very focused on the task at hand—defeating the Americans on their home turf and defending their title.

Injury laden in the last two international meets, the American team looked as healthy as could be expected. Only Brian Cashberg had a confirmed injury. His ankle had seriously hobbled him and kept him from tumbling at all until the day prior to compulsory competition. Tim Daggett was "gaining strength every day," as his shoulder was a question mark which would be answered only through actual competition.

Other than those two, the team looked healthy. Scott Johnson came in strong and determined, fresh off his victory in the Championships of the USA. Charles Lakes was healthy and in shape and



Scott Johnson continued his string of victories with an all-around title. Johnson made Pan American Games history when he became the first athlete to qualify in every event.

looked to be pushing for a berth in the all-around finals. Kevin Davis and Tom Schlessinger were ready to provide strong support needed in the team effort. So, on paper, the U.S. squad looked good. Cuba had no apparent injuries coming into the meet.

Another added pressure was the presence of every major media in the Western Hemisphere, including extensive television coverage here in the United States. So coming in, the gymnasts were well aware of the impact a good performance would have on the team prospects at the World Championships and on the national program.

### Compulsory Competition

The significance of the compulsory competition for the Americans wasn't that it was 50 percent of the team score, the real test came in the difference between the Pan American compulsory and their Olympic counterparts. As it turned out, the American squad had just three short weeks to prepare having just completed the Olympic compulsories at the Championships.

As was expected, the race quickly was down to the USA and Cuba. Johnson and Suarez set the early pace

with Johnson getting the best of the judging. During this session he received 9.90 on vault and parallel bars and established himself as the early leader scoring 58.75. "The Pan American compulsories are easier," said Johnson, "so what that does is make the competition tighter. It helped my confidence to go out and do my first event to par and score a 9.90."

All the questions about the strength in Daggett's shoulder were answered when his arm buckled during his rings routine. Up until this point, he was leading the competition but the 6.650 score dropped him far down into the pack. To further complicate his



Casimiro Suarez, of Cuba, was the old man of the meet at 34 years. But despite his age and five-foot, 11-inch frame, he still felt like he was No. 1.

maters, he performed his vault, a simple hand-spring, poorly and received a 9.000. "I have no strength in my left arm," said a dejected Daggett. "I came down hard on it and it completely buckled. It was a disaster." The disaster put Daggett in an eighth place tie with Jesus Rivera, of Cuba, at the end of compulsory.

Suarez went out and manhandled the equipment as he is used to doing. His large frame, five-feet, 11-inches, makes him one of the biggest gymnasts in the world. "Any athlete can do anything if he trains properly," said the veteran competitor. "My height poses no problems."

One problem it does pose is during his pommel horse routine. Because of his long limbs, it becomes hard for him to keep himself together and due to this the tenths add up making it his weakest event. That theory held true in the compulsory session as he received a 9.30 for his generally sloppy routine.

Going into the team finals, the United States, with a strong team effort, held a comfortable lead of 269.900 to 248.050 over Cuba. Brazil was a distant third (278.350), followed by Mexico (273.900).

#### Team Finals

For the team tale, it seemed all the Americans had to do was show up. They showed up but somewhere in between something went wrong. Lakes fell in his room at the Village and bruised his tailbone to the point he was on crutches and questionable. Ginsberg's ankle was ailing him.



Tim Daggett's shoulder posed some problems during his rings routine but he didn't let it hinder him during his high bar set which propelled him to a third place all-around medal.

Daggett was complaining of feeling sluggish which would later be diagnosed as the infant stages of mononucleosis, and to top matters off, Davis severely sprained his ankle warming up. So, the once comfortable lead looked very vulnerable.

But it stopped pride. "As soon as I put my jersey with the American flag on this morning, I realized that's what it is all about," said Johnson. "I was very proud of this team." Daggett added, "You just have to go and do your stuff when you're called upon."

There was plenty to be proud of that day in the Hoosier Dome. Johnson was superb in his performance, scoring 9.700 or better on every event. Davis, although severely hobbled with his sprained ankle keeping him out of two events

(floor and vault), helped the effort with a 9.750 on pommel horse and a 9.650 on parallel bars.

When the chalk cleared, the United States had accomplished greatness—a gold medal in the team competition. In doing so they shattered the old Pan American Games team score by over five points, amassing 577.650 points to Cuba's 574.100. Brazil, with a very consistent performance throughout the team finals, slipped in for the bronze with a score of 550.800. "It was all team tonight," said Daggett. "We had a lot of problems to overcome. What you saw tonight was six guys who wanted something very badly and who were going to work through anything to get it."

Afterwards, in Suarez's opinion, the United States did not deserve to win. "Our team, collectively, didn't fail on

any apparatus. I believe the judges were partial to the North Americans. We tried to be better than the Americans and I believe we competed a lot better than they did, but the points of the judges were very low for the Cubans," he said with a smile adding, "That is sports. We look forward to competing in the World Championships. We think we'll have a better chance."

#### All-Around Finals

As he had throughout the competition, Johnson's dominance flourished during the all-around finals. By this time, that was almost a given. The incredible story, from the men's program point of view, came from the gutsy performance of Daggett. "We all expected Scott to win," said Abie Greenfeld, men's head coach. "Tim getting the bronze

was really icing on the cake. That will be a real boost to the program."

While Johnson was amassing a large lead over Suarez with scores of 9.850 on floor and parallel bars, 9.750 on rings and 9.600 on vault, Daggett was slowly chipping away at Aguilera for third. The crowd turned full attention to Johnson when he fell off pommel horse in his fifth rotation and scored a 9.100, opening a small crack for Suarez. But with only high bar left, the gold was academic. "At that point," said Johnson, "I knew I had the competition won. I wasn't that concerned with the score, all I wanted to do was go into my last event and do the very best that I could." For the win, Suarez needed a 10.250 to tie Johnson.

Daggett, on the other hand, was up to his toughest event, rings. "I knew what Tim needed (9.550) to take the bronze, but I didn't tell him," said Grossfeld. "All I said was that it was really important—really important." Although noticeably struggling with the strength moves, Daggett put his heart into the routine and when he stuck his dismount, knowing he would receive the necessary points, Grossfeld rushed over to him and lifted him off the ground. Daggett received a 9.550, just enough to edge Aguilera by .050 for the bronze.

"I knew it would be a good day after vault, usually one of my worst events. I hit it and thought, 'Hey, that's really good for me,'" said Daggett. "But I'm just happy to get through this competition."

### Event Finals

It has become known as the gymnastics meet that would never end. In a marathon session lasting over four hours, jam-packed with all the plea bargaining and detente associated with most major peace negotiations, Sunday's finals were marred by countless judging conferences.

Despite all the the hemispherical harrering, despite the long hours, what came out was that Johnson became the first athlete in Pan American Games history to go all 24 events, which made his day even longer. In his day's work, Johnson earned four silver and two gold medals (rings and parallel bars) to go along with his team and all-around golds.

Daggett's strength didn't seem to hinder him during his pommel horse routine as he scored a strong 9.70 to take the gold on that event. Tony Pineda, representing Mexico, performed one of



the best high bar routines of the meet completing a Gaylord II for a 9.80. Another memorable routine was that of Suarez who completed a full twisting Gerager and a full twisting front out of an eagle grip for a 9.80 to tie for the silver with Johnson.

When not a student at UCLA, Tony Pineda is an international gymnast for his native Mexico. He performed one of the best high bar routines of the meet in which he completed his Gaylord II to score a 9.80.



Felix Aguilera of Cuba showed why his country will be a power to be reckoned with in the future. He and Casimiro Suarez provided the one-two punch to the Cuban's silver medal performance.



D

C

(A) Tim Duggitt accepts his gold medal on podium (above) with Scott Johnson (left) taking the silver. On the right, bronze medalists Felix Aguilar, Cuba, and Maria Gonzalez, Puerto Rico. (B) Disney's splendid Opening Ceremonies at the Indianapolis 500 Mile Track. (C) Scott Johnson waves during the Opening Ceremonies/Parade of Athletes. (D) The Ceremonies included thousands of balloons and volunteers. (E) Athletes from the United States. (F) Melissa Morales poses for the Star Spangled Banner after winning the gold for women's bare. Pinned as host of her in Sabina Mar. (G) The Homer Dome, the venue for gymnastics, was filled with people for almost every session as over 65,000 fans saw the action.





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# NO CONTEST

By Mike Botkin

**B**lowouts in the Hoosier Dome aren't uncommon, realizing it's the home of the professional football team, the Indianapolis Colts. But during the Pan American Games, a blowout of a different kind occurred as the United States completely dominated the women's gymnastics competition.

From the word go, the women took the team title and just about every other form of precious metal available.

Coming into the meet, the coaches tried to keep the girls on edge by telling them about how explosive the Cuban team was. But from the Championships of the USA, the team that evolved from that competition was so strong it was going to take a superhuman effort on the part of the Cubans, or any other Western Hemisphere country, to knock this squad off.

"This is an interesting group we have," said Greg Marsden, women's head coach. "They are young athletes that show a lot of promise. We're expecting to take home a lot of medals this week," he predicted prior to the meet.

The Canadians kept their first-team back home in training for the World Championships



Sabrina Mar is greeted by her enthusiastic teammates after her spectacular floor exercise routine. Leading the parade of huggers is Kelly Garrison-Stevens, Melissa Marlowe and alternate Phoebe Mills (with watches).





The victorious women's team taking the gold medal with a Pan American Games record score of 385.850 points to Cuba's 376.375. Pictured from the left are: Hope Spivey; Kristie Phillips; Melissa Marlowe; Kelly Garrison-Stevens; Sabrina Mar and Rhonda Facheu.

and decided to send the second string, who, as it turned out, were no match for the United States or Cuba. So, as it was in the men's competition, right off the bat it was a battle between the U.S. and Cuba—one that didn't last too long.

#### **Compulsory Competition**

The first indication of how well the women were going to fare came on the very first vault, or salto de caballo as it is called in Spanish. Kelly Garrison-Stevens, who before the meet was on the bubble as far as the status of alternate went, nailed her front handspring and set the scoring at 9.875.

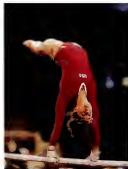
She also set a high standard on the following event, uneven bars, scoring a 9.850. From there the scores inched upward ending in a 9.850 for Melissa Marlowe. So after the first two events, the United States had amassed a lead of 1.60. The only break came when Rhonda Facheu fell off beam to begin that rotation, but by the time Kristie Phillips ended, the scores were up to 9.825.

At the end of the compulsory competition, the Americans held a

commanding 192.825 to 189.600 lead over Cuba. Canada was way back with an even 185.

#### **Team Finals**

The women squeaked through with a nine point victory, starting the old Pan American Games record with 385.850 points. The excitement of the day came from Sabrina Mar who, surprisingly, led after two rounds. The first five



Considered by many to be the most powerful female gymnast in this country, Rhonda Facheu shows her power during her bars routine.



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Kelly Garrison-Stevens is a picture of grace and beauty during her balance beam routine as she glides effortlessly to a gold medal on that event.

spots and like a USA center with Mar at the top with 77,550 points.

Mar's ascent to the top of the standings was aided by Phillips' fall off beam which shocked everyone. "It was a stupid mistake on my part," said Phillips. "I wasn't concentrating on my fall turn. It just happened, so I can't get mad." One thing it did prove was this gymnast was human.

Facha neared perfection for her round-off layout with a full twist vault, scoring a 9.950. "Vault is my strongest area," she said. "I felt like that was one of the better vaults I have ever done."

Spirits ran high after the overwhelming team victory. "We want to make a statement to



Sabrina Mar is happy the pain of 1985 is all behind her.

## Mar-velous Time

By Mike Botkin

**T**he dream year—1985. Sabrina Mar bursts onto the gymnastics scene, becoming national champ in her first Championships as a senior team member. "That," adrosts Mar, "was a great year."

The difference a year makes. In came 1986 and Mar suddenly was forced to come to grips with injury. "After the World Championships, we discovered my back problem," she said. Practice and pain became one and the same, Mar wondered why she even continued. "In 1986, I didn't know why I was doing this to myself. I

didn't know how to train. All I knew was 1986 was so close, I couldn't give up my goal (the Olympics). I had to work something out."

Determination led Mar to develop her current training regimen. "I had to realize I couldn't do as many repetitions as before. I had to use my time better with no waste."

With the correct formula, Mar was able to return to competition in the same, if not better, shape. "I feel stronger. I have grown three to five inches since 1985 and SCIATS has developed a new conditioning program which takes one hour after each practice."

Since Mar won her championship and competed in the World Championships, her role

on the team has changed as much as her training schedule. "Kelly (Garrison-Stevens) and I are considered 'veterans.' I think that is an advantage to the team but it's a different feeling being the veteran considering just two years ago I was the kid."

But, standing atop the victor's stand waiting to receive the all-around gold, all the pain and time spent struggling was suddenly put into perspective. "1986 helped to open my eyes. It helped me become a better competitor. Gymnastics takes a lot of your life. It's hard to explain, but it's something that becomes a part of you. On the awards stand, I thought about everything that happened last year and it was all worthwhile."

the world that the U.S. is back," said Marsden. "By Seoul, we intend to be competitive with anyone who walks on the floor."

His sentiments were echoed by the two leaders. "The U.S. team has improved so much it will shock the rest of the world," said Mar. "When they (the Soviet Union) find out how much we beat Cuba, they will be scared," said Phillips.

#### All-Around Finals

Again, it was an all USA show. Mar, Phillips and Garrison-Stevens provided the punch coming into the finals with almost a two point lead over Cuba's Elsa Chivas.

It was destined Mar take the all-around title. After coming within inches of giving up on the

sport in 1986 due to her back problems, this member of SCATS looked stronger than at any other time in her career. "I seriously contemplated leaving the sport. I had serious doubts about my ability. I couldn't do what I wanted and it became very frustrating," said Mar. "But I had my goals and I was determined. It takes a lot for me to give up. The 1988 Olympics—I want to get there, get a medal of any color and retire."

With a couple of inches added to her sleek frame, Mar was absolutely devastating in all four of her events. Perhaps her best routine of the competition came on floor, her first event that day. With Bruce Springsteen's "Born In The USA" in the background,



Elsa Chivas helped Cuba settle into its role of silver medalists handily defeating the Canadian squad 378.375 to 388.725.



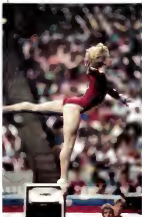
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Kristie Phillips leapt directly to a gold medal on floor with 19.538 points. Even though she had a few mistakes, Phillips still managed to place second all-around behind the excellent performance of Sabrina Mar.

Mar beautifully glided through her skills, tumbling like an acrobat and dancing as if she were a ballerina. Her ending pose, with fingers pointed towards the sky, left no doubt as to who would win the all-around title.

"I was really happy with floor," said Mar. "I had trained for two months and I'm glad I got the opportunity to show it all. Starting on a good note like that always gives me confidence. I really didn't look at the scores that much, I know if I hit, I would be in position."

With her 9.875 score, much of the mystery faded. If Mar hit, there was really no way Phillips could catch her for the gold. Phillips, a competitor that can never be counted out, committed another misdeed, falling off beam, which sealed her fate to second place. "The meet, so far, hasn't been great for me," admitted Phillips. "After I fell on beam, I wasn't really motivated to go out and finish the competition. I was upset about other events and let them get the best of me."

As Maroden pointed out at the meet's inception, this was a very talent-laden bunch. "We said all week that on any given day, any one of them could win. Kristie made a mistake and that was the difference. You have to have consistency and confidence; you must execute and you have to have the difficulty. In that order, that's what we are looking for."

Garrison-Steves put to rest the rumor that collegiate gymnasts, or "old gymnasts" couldn't compete internationally with her bronze medal performance. Slimmer and stronger than she was when she placed second in the Championships of the USA in 1985, Steves provided stability and experience for this team. She was absolutely poetry in motion on beam scoring a 9.650.

#### Individual Event Finals

What the individual event finals provided was the opportunity for some other countries to share a little of the spotlight. Cuba took full advantage of this on the first event, vault, as Laura Rodriguez scored a

9.670 for the gold and Luisa Prato a 9.650 for the silver. Phillips took the bronze.

The United States sent its two premier all-around specialists into the finals as Marlowe edged Mar for the gold medal. Both routines were superb, scoring 9.800 each, but Marlowe held the preliminary edge. Brazil broke into the medal column with Luisa Ribeiro winning the bronze.

Garrison-Steves continued her excellent beam work, capping off her fine competition with the gold medal for her 9.718 routine. She edged Cuba's Tania Guis and Chirva in the standings.

Phillips worked out some of her frustrations taking the gold medal on floor. With her music, the theme from the *Bunny Hill Show*, her energetic routine was greeted with a standing ovation by the crowd as she received a 9.818. Mar took the silver with Rodriguez taking the bronze.



Cuba's Tania Naredo pases to look back at the Americans prior to her bars routine.

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# **The Tenth Pan American Games 8-23 August 1987 Indianapolis (USA)**

## **Individual Results**

Place	Name	Nation	Points	Bars	Beam	Vault	Par B.	SwB	Total	Points	Place
1	Scott Johnson	USA	1,820	1,140	1,750	1,400	1,020	1,420	17,750	18,120	1
2	Claudio Suarez	CUB	1,750	1,250	1,600	1,400	1,020	1,100	17,700	17,900	2
3	Tim Daggett	USA	1,580	1,420	1,150	1,750	1,020	1,160	17,800	17,100	3
4	Felix Aguilera	CUB	1,750	1,450	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,100	17,500	16,800	4
5	Brian Gmelig	USA	1,750	1,450	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	17,000	17,100	5
6	Sammy Gonzalez	CUB	1,680	1,350	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	16,900	16,500	6
7	Guillermo Pardo	PER	1,450	1,450	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,100	16,800	16,400	7
8	Gerardo Gonzalez	PER	1,450	1,450	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,100	16,800	16,400	8
9	Alan Nabel	CAN	1,480	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,100	16,700	16,400	9
10	Marin Samadina	PUR	1,100	1,100	1,000	1,000	1,020	1,100	16,200	16,100	10
11	Alejandro Posada	MEX	1,050	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	16,000	16,100	11
12	George Diaz Sardi	MEX	1,000	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,100	16,000	16,100	12
13	Carlos Pablier	PER	1,200	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	15,800	15,800	13
14	Frank Putschke	CAN	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	15,800	15,800	14
15	Diego Lopez	MEX	1,050	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	15,750	15,750	15
16	Alvaro Morera	PUR	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	15,700	15,700	16
17	Lola Orellana	MEX	1,000	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	15,300	15,300	17
18	Reiner Gonzalez	PUR	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	15,300	15,300	18
19	Michael Cohen	PUR	1,000	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	15,300	15,300	19
20	Eric Gekkele	GER	1,000	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,020	1,000	15,300	15,300	20

## **Team Results**

Place	Nation	Points	Bars	Beam	Vault	Par B.	SwB	Total	Points	Place
1	United States	16,100	16,100	16,100	16,100	16,100	16,100	16,100	16,100	1
2	Cuba	15,800	15,800	15,800	15,800	15,800	15,800	15,800	15,800	2
3	Mexico	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	3
4	Peru	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	4
5	Canada	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	5
6	Puerto Rico	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	6

## **Floor Exercise**

Place	Name	Nation	Points	Bars	Beam	Vault	Par B.	SwB	Total
1	Guillermo Suarez	CUB	1,400	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
2	Scott Johnson	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
3	Felix Aguilera	CUB	1,400	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
4	Alan Nabel	CAN	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
5	Alejandro Posada	MEX	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
6	Yong Fuenka	MEX	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
7	Brian Gmelig	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
8	Guillermo Pardo	PER	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100

## **Pommel Horse**

Place	Name	Nation	Points	Bars	Beam	Vault	Par B.	SwB	Total
1	Tim Daggett	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
2	Scott Johnson	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
3	Felix Aguilera	CUB	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
4	Brian Gmelig	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
5	Yong Fuenka	MEX	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
6	Sammy Gonzalez	CUB	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
7	Scott Johnson	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
8	Carlos Pablier	PER	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100

## **Rings**

Place	Name	Nation	Points	Bars	Beam	Vault	Par B.	SwB	Total
1	Scott Johnson	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
2	Yong Fuenka	MEX	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
3	Alan Nabel	CAN	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
4	Brian Gmelig	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
5	Sammy Gonzalez	CUB	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
6	Alejandro Posada	MEX	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
7	Carlos Pablier	PER	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
8	Brian Gmelig	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100

## **Vault**

Place	Name	Nation	Points	Bars	Beam	Vault	Par B.	SwB	Total
1	Claudio Suarez	CUB	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
2	Scott Johnson	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
3	Alejandro Posada	MEX	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
4	Felix Aguilera	CUB	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
5	Brian Gmelig	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
6	Alan Nabel	CAN	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
7	Brian Gmelig	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
8	Alan Nabel	CAN	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100

## **Parallel Bars**

Place	Name	Nation	Points	Bars	Beam	Vault	Par B.	SwB	Total
1	Scott Johnson	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
2	Claudio Suarez	CUB	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
3	Felix Aguilera	CUB	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
4	Guillermo Pardo	PER	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
5	Yong Fuenka	MEX	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
6	Tim Daggett	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
7	Carlos Pablier	PER	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
8	George Diaz Sardi	MEX	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100

## **Horizontal Bar**

Place	Name	Nation	Points	Bars	Beam	Vault	Par B.	SwB	Total
1	Felix Aguilera	CUB	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
2	Claudio Suarez	CUB	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
3	Scott Johnson	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
4	Tim Daggett	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
5	Yong Fuenka	MEX	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
6	Sammy Gonzalez	CUB	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
7	Guillermo Pardo	PER	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100
8	Brian Gmelig	USA	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,100



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# The Tenth Pan American Games 8 - 23 August 1987 Indianapolis (USA)

## Individual Results

Place	Name	Nation	Vault	Bars	Beam	Floor	Total 5	Points	Total
1	Sabrina Ibar	USA	9.750	9.750	9.750	9.750	39.000	39.750	77.500
2	Isolina Phillips	USA	9.650	9.750	9.750	9.750	39.000	39.171	77.500
3	Bely Gusevskaya	USA	9.750	9.750	9.650	9.750	39.000	38.949	77.000
4	Laura Rodriguez	USA	9.600	9.600	9.750	9.650	39.000	37.125	76.400
5	Thana Gao	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.750	9.600	39.000	37.000	76.000
6	Laura Rodriguez	CHN	9.750	9.650	9.650	9.750	37.500	37.000	76.000
7	Ella Chiriac	CHN	9.550	9.650	9.750	9.750	39.000	37.000	76.000
8	Tatiana Figueiredo	USA	9.550	9.650	9.650	9.750	37.000	36.900	76.000
9	Tatiana Figueiredo	CHN	9.550	9.650	9.650	9.600	37.500	36.900	76.000
10	Andrea Gurnay	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	9.600	37.000	36.900	76.000
11	Michelle Flores	USA	9.550	9.650	9.650	9.600	36.900	36.750	76.000
12	Alexia Hagen	CHN	9.550	9.650	9.750	9.750	39.000	36.675	76.000
13	Gracia Masden	VEN	9.450	9.650	9.750	9.750	39.000	36.600	76.000
14	Bonita Gumpert	PER	9.350	9.650	9.650	9.400	37.000	36.500	76.000
15	Marion Pomares	USA	9.350	9.650	9.650	9.600	39.000	36.500	76.000
16	Adriana Duffy	PER	9.450	9.650	9.650	9.600	39.000	36.500	76.000
17	Isolina Phillips	PER	9.650	9.650	9.650	9.750	39.000	36.500	76.000
18	Graciela Lobato	ARG	9.350	9.750	9.650	9.600	39.000	36.400	76.000
19	Marion Pomares	ARG	9.350	9.650	9.750	9.650	39.000	36.400	76.000
20	Martha Cecilia Insuasti	ARG	9.350	9.650	9.650	9.650	39.000	36.400	76.000
21	Adriana Duffy	VEN	9.350	9.650	9.750	9.650	39.000	36.400	76.000
22	Aida Otero	VEN	9.350	9.650	9.650	9.750	39.000	36.400	76.000
23	Michelle Masden	CHN	9.550	9.650	9.750	9.750	39.000	36.400	76.000

## Team Results

Place	Nation	Vault	Bars	Beam	Floor	Total	Total	SA + LB
1	United States	1A	49.000	50.000	47.000	49.000	195.000	
		1B	49.000	50.000	47.000	49.000	195.000	195.000
2	China	1A	48.000	47.000	49.000	47.000	191.000	
		1B	48.000	47.000	49.000	47.000	191.000	191.000
3	Canada	1A	46.000	46.000	48.000	46.000	186.000	
		1B	46.000	46.000	48.000	46.000	186.000	186.000
4	Brazil	1A	47.000	46.000	46.000	46.000	185.000	
		1B	46.000	46.000	46.000	46.000	185.000	185.000
5	Sweden	1A	46.000	46.000	46.000	46.000	184.000	
		1B	46.000	46.000	46.000	46.000	184.000	184.000
6	Argentina	1A	46.000	46.000	46.000	46.000	184.000	
		1B	46.000	46.000	46.000	46.000	184.000	184.000
7	Venezuela	1A	46.000	46.000	46.000	46.000	184.000	
		1B	46.000	46.000	46.000	46.000	184.000	184.000

## Vault

Place	Name	Nation	1A	1B	Points	Total 2
1	Laura Rodriguez	USA	9.750	9.750	9.750	19.500
2	Laura Rodriguez	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
3	Isolina Phillips	USA	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
4	Isolina Phillips	USA	9.750	9.650	9.650	19.300
5	Gracia Masden	VEN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
6	Tatiana Figueiredo	USA	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
7	Adriana Duffy	VEN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
8	Adriana Duffy	PER	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300

## Uneven Bars

Place	Name	Nation	1A	1B	Points	Total 2
1	Michelle Masden	USA	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
2	Sabrina Ibar	USA	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
3	Laura Rodriguez	USA	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
4	Ella Chiriac	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
5	Michelle Flores	USA	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
6	Thana Gao	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
7	Laura Rodriguez	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
8	Tatiana Figueiredo	USA	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300

## Balance Beam

Place	Name	Nation	1A	1B	Points	Total 2
1	Bely Gusevskaya	USA	9.750	9.750	9.750	19.500
2	Thana Gao	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
3	Ella Chiriac	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
4	Sabrina Ibar	USA	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
5	Bonita Gumpert	PER	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
6	Michelle Masden	VEN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
7	Michelle Flores	USA	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
8	Isolina Phillips	PER	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300

## Floor Exercise

Place	Name	Nation	1A	1B	Points	Total 2
1	Isolina Phillips	USA	9.750	9.750	9.750	19.500
2	Sabrina Ibar	USA	9.750	9.750	9.750	19.500
3	Laura Rodriguez	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
4	Andrea Gurnay	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
5	Michelle Flores	USA	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
6	Bonita Gumpert	PER	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
7	Thana Gao	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300
8	Ella Chiriac	CHN	9.650	9.650	9.650	19.300



(Right) Hope Spivak. (Left) Uneven Bars Gold Medalist Melissa Masden.



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# THE GOLDEN MOMENT ARRIVES

By Mike Boitkin

**T**he Stars and Stripes were hoisted and the national anthem rang for the first time in the history of rhythmic gymnastics in the United States during the Tenth Pan American Games, August 9-11 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Diane Simpson presented her country with its first gold in international competition, accumulating two gold and three silver medals in the process.

"It had been a long time coming," said a proud Simpson. "My thoughts (on the awards stand) were about my grandfather and my family. Then I started thinking about our government and how I was contributing to the country. This is the first time the flag and anthem have been raised for the United States and I feel very proud and honored to have competed for the US."

But as great as Simpson's efforts were in the individual events, she still fell short in her attempt at the all-around title, a title she had with-in her grasp. She let it slip during her last event, the clubs, when

three drops and a 9.200 score gave Cuba's Lourdes Medina the open door for the gold. "I was ready to do a great routine. I think I was as calm as before any routine," said Simpson.

Medina, however, wasn't quite as calm before her final events. "I was very nervous at first," said Medina, "but as soon as I heard the crowd was behind me, it felt like home." Medina, 19, was born in Havana and began rhythmic gymnastics when she was nine. "Ballet is my second choice, but what captured my imagination first was the artistic aspects of rhythmic," said Medina. "Since I began, my athletic career has been very strong."

The confidence she displayed in herself was evident on and off the competitive floor. While performing, this freshman at the University of Physical and Educational Culture completed the intricate aspects of her routines with ease. She also made the transitional moves look like what they are supposed to be—transitional. During the first day of the all-around competition, she demonstrated with the rope and clubs just how smooth under pressure she could



Diane Simpson became the first American rhythmic gymnast to win a gold medal in an international competition. She won golds for her rope and ribbon events.



be. That is where she really won the competition, completing the two hardest events without a flaw. That put the pressure on Simpson for the second day where she had to compete rope and clubs.

Going into the final day of all-around competition, Simpson held a .080 lead on Medina. Simpson came out very confident and completed her rope routine for a 9.70. Medina, not to be different, hung close with a very flashy hoop routine which included many intricate tosses for which she was awarded a 9.70 also.

Not to be overlooked was the performance of Marina Kuniavsky who was hanging tough tied for third after three events with Canada's Mary Fuzesi. Kuniavsky's performance and the Prudential Life Insurance Company have something in common — they are both solid as a rock. On this day, her rope routine was very crisp in her deliveries and catches and her guitar accompaniment fit her every move.

But in the final routine, the rock chipped and Simpson's clubs became independent and decided to go their own way, which resulted in her drops and subsequent score leading to the silver. Kuniavsky's drop took the breath away from those who had been watching her over a period of time. During her performances in the past, the score bet was on her to catch her clubs, but on this day the fatigue of the competition hit her.



**Lourdes Medina of Cuba was flawless in her quest for the all-around gold. She defeated American Diane Simpson by a scant .280 for the top all-around spot. She also won gold medals in hoop and clubs.**

"I think we could have done much better," said Kuniavsky. "Competition after competition has left me very tired. The drop really brought me down. I have just realized how tired I am."

So with the drop, in slipped Medina and Fuzesi for the gold and bronze medals respectively. The Canadian, who looks like a clone of Olympic Gold Medalist Lori Fung, was very ex-

cited about her positioning in the final standings. "I was happy to get anything," she beamed. "I tried my hardest in expression and everything," adding, "I'm just very happy." Fuzesi, who ranks fourth in her country, is just 13 years old and has been competing in rhythmic gymnastics for four years. Prior to that she had been in pre-competition artistic gymnastics.

Another American, Irina Rubenstein, was a steady performer throughout the competition. Her scores, which ranged from 8.25 to 8.45, added to her sixth place all-around finish. Her 8.45 in clubs got her into the event finals.

#### **Event Finals**

Anticipation was quelled as to the condition of Simpson's nerves almost immediately during the event finals as the



During the clubs medal ceremony, gold medalist Lourdes Medina is sandwiched between Canadians Mary Fuzesi (right) and Susan Cushman, bronze medalist (left). Marina Kanyavsky of the USA (far left) tied Cushman for the bronze.

Evansville, Illinois native was flint up with rope. As she stepped onto the competitive carpet, she was serenely calm. Once her music began, though, her countenance changed and she was arrogantly confident as she attacked the competitive floor and came away with the highest score awarded thus far in the meet, a 9.60.

It was at that time she realized she had won the gold medal, the first ever for a United States competitor. "I was very confident today, I wasn't all freaked out. I was calmer and I felt aggressive. I wasn't worried about the scores, if I performed to my best capabilities, I knew they would be there. All I was really worried about was doing the best that I can," she said. Following Simpson in the rope standings were Medina, who scored a 9.75, and Kanyavsky, who came back with a 9.60 for the bronze.

Medina came into the hoop finale with a .10 lead and flowed to a 9.75 score which really gave her an insurmountable lead. Simpson, going for broke, performed the best routine of the entire competition scoring another 9.60, which was .05 short of tying for the gold. As a true champion will, she gave it a great attempt. Kanyavsky was steady with a 9.55 routine but Fuzesi came through with a 9.60 to sneak in for the bronze.

An inspired crowd, the largest to view a rhythmic competition in the United States since the 1964 Olympics, heartily approved of Simpson's stellar hoop routine. Her coach, Irina Vdovets explained why Simpson is so natural at this discipline. "No matter how good the girl is, if she doesn't have the feel of the music, like Diana does, then she is not as good. To teach the girl the skill is not as hard as teaching her to move with the music," said Vdovets adding, "Diana is an actress."

Kanyavsky competed to a drummer of a different beat to hammer out a steady clubs routine of 9.50 to tie for the bronze on this event. Susan Cushman, 15, whose energetic routine displayed many quick and sharp movements and catches, was also awarded a bronze. Medina, slowed a bit by fatigue, still put together a potent 9.70 routine to win the gold. Fuzesi, who suffered a major drop, settled for the silver.

The ribbon final became another showcase for American Simpson as she attacked her routine to end with a 9.75 and another gold medal. She won the high toss of the competition award as her final toss nearly scraped the rafters of the Indianapolis Convention Center ceiling more than 35 feet above. Medina won the silver and Fuzesi tied with Thalia Fung of Cuba for the bronze just edging out Kanyavsky.

After the competition, the Cuban delegation was very pleased with their results. Said Medina, "I feel very sorry about this competition. I did not expect such good results, but I fed strongly about the backup of my trainer. My purpose was to participate the best I can with honor. Everytime you participate with honor, pride and confidence, your results are always deserved," she said. "Especially when they are this good."

Although Medina admits that her training can take her only so far, she depends upon the support her teddy bear "Socha" brings her. But aside from that, she feels the Cuban program is on the rise. "We have nothing to envy the Bulgarians about because we, too, have revolutionized the sport. They are much more experienced than us but I would not be surprised if we do not end up very close with them in a competition very soon."

# The Tenth Pan American Games 8-23 August 1987 Indianapolis (USA)

## All-Around Results

Place	Name	Points	Bars	Beam	Clubs	Ribbon	Total
1	Lourdes Medina	USA	9.500	9.700	9.500	9.600	38.300
2	Oliver Simpson	USA	9.700	9.600	9.500	9.600	38.400
3	Mary Parent	CAN	9.400	9.600	9.600	9.600	38.200
4	Marina Kopyeva	URS	9.600	9.600	9.400	9.600	38.200
5	Thalia Pong	CHN	9.500	9.600	9.600	9.500	38.200
6	Irene Belandier	USA	9.400	9.500	9.400	9.500	37.800
7	Susan Gribben	CAN	9.600	9.500	9.400	9.400	37.900
8	Maria Beckman	URS	9.200	9.700	9.500	9.500	38.900
9	Renata Pavlov	URS	9.300	9.500	9.500	9.600	38.900
10	Barbara Roberts	CAN	9.100	9.500	9.500	9.500	38.600
11	Maria Lopez	USA	9.400	9.100	9.700	9.600	38.800
12	Barbara Roberts	AND	9.700	9.500	9.500	9.300	38.000

## Rope

Place	Name	Points	Points	Points	Total
1	Oliver Simpson	USA	9.700	9.600	19.300
2	Lourdes Medina	URS	9.500	9.600	19.100
3	Marina Kopyeva	URS	9.500	9.600	19.100
4	Mary Parent	CAN	9.600	9.500	19.100
5	Thalia Pong	CHN	9.500	9.600	19.100
6	Susan Gribben	CAN	9.500	9.600	19.100
7	Renata Pavlov	URS	9.500	9.600	19.100
8	Maria Lopez	USA	9.500	9.600	19.100

## Hoop

Place	Name	Points	Points	Points	Total
1	Lourdes Medina	URS	9.500	9.700	19.200
2	Oliver Simpson	URS	9.600	9.600	19.200
3	Mary Parent	CAN	9.500	9.700	19.200
4	Marina Kopyeva	URS	9.500	9.700	19.200
5	Thalia Pong	CHN	9.600	9.600	19.200
6	Susan Gribben	CAN	9.500	9.700	19.200
7	Maria Lopez	URS	9.500	9.700	19.200
8	Renata Pavlov	URS	9.500	9.700	19.200

## Clubs

Place	Name	Points	Points	Points	Total
1	Lourdes Medina	URS	9.600	9.700	19.300
2	Mary Parent	CAN	9.600	9.700	19.300
3	Marina Kopyeva	URS	9.600	9.700	19.300
4	Susan Gribben	CAN	9.600	9.700	19.300
5	Renata Pavlov	URS	9.600	9.700	19.300
6	Thalia Pong	CHN	9.600	9.700	19.300
7	Irene Belandier	URS	9.600	9.700	19.300
8	Barbara Roberts	AND	9.600	9.700	19.300

## Ribbon

Place	Name	Points	Points	Points	Total
1	Oliver Simpson	URS	9.500	9.700	19.200
2	Marina Kopyeva	URS	9.600	9.600	19.200
3	Mary Parent	CAN	9.500	9.700	19.200
4	Thalia Pong	CHN	9.500	9.700	19.200
5	Marina Kopyeva	URS	9.500	9.700	19.200
6	Susan Gribben	CAN	9.600	9.600	19.200
7	Maria Lopez	URS	9.600	9.600	19.200
8	Renata Pavlov	URS	9.600	9.600	19.200

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## PRODUCT UPDATE



### GYM TRIX Saves Space

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NH invented the 'Space Saver,' an anchoring system designed to modify the traditional cabling systems for uneven bars and high bar. The system can save the gym up to 150 feet and in most cases allow for another station of equipment.

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A fantastic idea, designed and manufactured by GYM TRIX, INC. of Dover, NH, this system has been installed in over 10 states. For further information on gaining more space please write or call Bert Wyman, 68 Knox Marsh Road, Dover, NH (603) 749-3587.



### Alpha Factor's New Catalog

Alpha Factor, known worldwide for top quality garments and innovative designs in competitive gymnastics apparel, is introducing its new 1987-88 catalog. In addition, a special unprinted sportswear line will feature a white satin jacket with USA graphics. With every purchase, Alpha Factor will make a donation to our national teams. For more information on the Alpha Factor catalog and other sportswear, write to Alpha Factor, Dept. T, Box 6260, Valley View Road, York, PA 17406.

## SPONSOR UPDATE



### Oak Harbor Tigers Club of Month

The Oak Harbor Gymnastics Tiger Team, located at 3675 N. Goldie Road in Oak Harbor, WA, is directed by Robert Earl and Phyllis Earl, who was a member of the 1964 German National Team. The

Tigers, who are coached by Bobby Sullivan, have a current enrollment of 60 with the highest level of competitor Class II.

The Tiger team consists of 25 gymnasts ranging in ages of seven through 15. There are active teams at the Class II, III and IV levels. In 1987, the Tigers hosted the Class IV State Championship meet.

The Oak Harbor Tiger Team also traveled to Europe in 1987. The gymnasts competed in England, Switzerland and Germany at the end of June. The traveling team consisted of 12 gymnasts at Class II, III and IV levels and were between the ages of 10 and 15. The gymnasts were responsible for the expense of their own airline ticket and personal expenses. While in Europe, the team stayed with host families in each country making

the next biggest expense: renting vans for ground transportation. The parent booster club was busy with fund raisers, including candy sales, raffles and sponsoring meals for the trip.

The Dodge promotional banner was displayed during the Class IV State Championship meet, which had 158 competing gymnasts and 800 spectators. The Dodge folders were used in making "friendship packets" which were passed out to the delegation in Germany and a Dodge banner was also awarded to the delegation.

Oak Harbor Gymnastics works hard and is always ready to help other gymnasts. This was their third European Tour. Congratulations from USA Gymnastics and Dodge.



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# SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF

## Special Olympics Draws 4,700 Worldwide Athletes



Special Olympian Shawn Lewis stopped to show his emotion during his floor routine at the International Special Olympics held in South Bend, Indiana recently. Lewis competed with 4,700 athletes from all over the world during this event. (USOPW photo © 1987 by Carl Abernathy)

By Carl Abernathy

**S**hawn Lewis completed a flip during the floor exercises then stopped. "Yeah," he shouted, waving a clenched fist in the air. He completed another move then stopped again.

The judges simply smiled. They didn't want

to deduct points from the 21-year-old Springfield, Oregon native's score. After all, celebrating achievements is what the Special Olympics is all about. Lewis and 4,700 other athletes from 72 countries and all 50 states, including more than 300 gymnasts, had plenty to celebrate at the International Special Olympics meet held the first week of August in South Bend, Indiana.

The Games were for children and adults who are physically or mentally handicapped. Yet, the athletes refused to dwell on their handicaps while competing.

One gymnast with cerebral palsy struggled a bit during floor exercises, but, he went on finishing his routine while a room full of spectators cheered on.

James Lee, a gymnastics judge from Urbana, Illinois, said he was especially moved by the performance. Lee, a former women's and men's gymnastics coach at the University of Illinois, is an experienced gymnastics judge. But being a part of the Special Olympics was truly special, he said.

"It brought tears to my eyes when I saw that kid with cerebral palsy going through his floor routine. It took him a while, but you could see

the determination on his face and how hard he was trying. And then when he finished and his face broke out in a smile, that was really gratifying," said Lee.

A host of celebrities, including former Olympic champions Mary Lou Retton, Bart Conner and rhythmic gymnast Lydia Bree, found out how gratifying working with Special Olympians can be.

Dick Sergeant, who starred in the television show "Bewitched" certainly did. While helping with the gymnastics events, Sergeant must have been hugged nearly 100 times in the course of an hour while watching the participants and, later, presenting the awards. It's not after that athletes embrace everyone else around them, competitors included, after each performance. Winning was important at the Games, but not as important, it seemed, as trying.

In one basketball game, for example, members of one team passed the ball to the opposing team and cheered for the opponents because they'd built a 32-2 lead. Enough was enough, they thought.

And in one gymnastics division for boys between eight and 15 years of age, three athletes became inseparable

friends, despite the fact that none of the three could speak the other's language.

Choi Weh Wan from Hong Kong, a tall, muscular 18-year-old, encouraged every athlete before his event with an affectionate pat on the back. Afterwards, he insisted that everyone get their picture taken together.

Patrick Leguillon, a short 16-year-old from France, was the favorite of the group with his array of funny faces and antics. To amuse his new friends, he regularly attacked his Tony the Tiger balloon, yelling at it in mock anger. He also snaked up on people to scare them, only to smile innocently when they turned around.

Bago Johnson, a 15-year-old American, spent his time trying to find ways to communicate. He asked for a sheet of paper and a pen, writing down English words in the hope that Leguillon could read English even if he couldn't speak it. Apparently, Leguillon couldn't, but he could interpret smiles and body language.

As it turned out, Choi won the gold medal in their division for best all-around gymnast. Leguillon and Johnson tied for second. Standing on the victory platform, with Leguillon on his tip-toes, the three held their hands far above their heads, smiling broadly. "Who says those kids can't understand each other?" one volunteer asked.

It truly was fun meeting athletes from all over the world, said Don Berndt, a 36-year-old special Olympian from South Bend. But, in addition to their friendship, it

was nice being around the other athletes because they pushed him to work harder, he said.

Berndt worked hard to prepare for the Games, spending four hours per night, four nights a week practicing with his coach, Tracey Nicodemus. "He's really been looking forward to this," Nicodemus said. "He catches on to things easily. I think gymnastics is in his blood."

His persistence paid off with gold medals on floor, vault and high bar with a silver medal on parallel bars. "Gymnastics is an enjoyable sport," he said. "And the Special Olympics is great. I'm glad they had this here."

George Kelly of Rochester, New Hampshire, the coach of two gymnasts with Down's Syndrome, said Special Olympics has helped his

athletes gain self-esteem. After starting out in "special" gymnastics classes, 21-year-old Darlene Sullivan and 13-year-old Rebecca Roth have graduated to classes with students who are not handicapped, he said. "Down's kids have an affinity to be earth-bound. This has liberated them. This gives them something to be proud of."

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### Director/Coach

Director/Coach. Immediate opening in Seattle, WA looking for a Director for the United States Gymnastics on Prince George. The club is operated by the American Advisory Council which is affiliated with the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation. Responsibilities of the Director would include: Coaching a U.S.G.A. club team, teaching pre-school and recreational classes. The part time position would be from October 1, 1981 to August 31, 1982. The starting salary range is \$4000.00 to \$1,800.00 a month. Call John Harmons at (206) 428-3534.

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